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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

El Paso MFP

(URA or MFP)

TITLE PAGE *

State California	District Bakersfield
Resource Area Inyokern	
Planning Unit El Paso	Number
Total Acres	Federal Sub-Surface
NRL	State
Withdrawn	Private
Other	Other

PREPARED OR REVIEWED

Rich Harbor

(Area Manager)

8/10/76

(Date)

ORIGINALLY APPROVED

Louis A. Ball

(District Manager)

8/10/76

(Date)

REVIEWED AND UPDATED

AREA MANAGER	DATE

* This form may be used as the Title Page for the Unit Resource Analysis and/or the Management Framework Plan

EL PASO
MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN
AUGUST 10, 1976

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THE EL PASO PLANNING UNIT

In this planning unit, Sierran, Mojavean, and Great Basin geographic provinces intermingle, producing a variety of landscape features and animal and plant associations. The Sierra and Garlock Faults cut through the area. Unusual riparian habitats occupy canyons which blend desert and mountain features and support rich assemblages of plants and birds. Basalt mountains provide secure and rocky habitats for birds of prey, which are rapidly diminishing nationally.

The area has been mined extensively. Randsburg's Yellow Aster Mine yielded millions in gold in the 1890's.

Approximately 95 percent of the surface area is grazed by cattle and sheep under a system of permits and leases administered by the Bureau. While much of the range is now in fair to poor condition, new and better range management methods promise improvement of range and wildlife habitat quality in the future.

Recreationists flee to the close-in desert areas on weekends by the thousands - - off-road vehicle enthusiasts, rock collectors, sightseers, history buffs, and those who simply seek the solitude and quietude of a rapidly shrinking desert. The desert-facing canyons and Rand Mountains of the El Paso Unit provide some of the best upland game bird hunting in the California Desert.

Approximately 50 percent of the lands in the El Paso Planning Unit are federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, an agency of the Department of the Interior, which has the responsibility of managing on a multiple use basis the lands under its jurisdiction. Such management is no easy task, particularly when planning units are highly endowed with natural and cultural resource values and at the same time, serve the economic and consumptive needs of the American people.

INTRODUCTION

These decisions set the policy and management direction for the national resource lands in the El Paso Planning Unit.

Some of these decisions are effective immediately and will be reflected in a variety of ways. For example, the "designation" of the various Natural Areas shown on the map has the immediate effect of specifying the types of public use, resource conditions, outdoor recreation occupancy and use, and resource development which will be authorized or permitted by the Bureau of Land Management. Bureau actions on requests for use of the land within these areas will immediately reflect the purposes and objectives of these designations as stated in the Code of Federal Regulations.

Certain other decisions will require additional study and planning. For example, the decisions related to range management will require preparation of detailed Allotment Management Plans before implementation can take place.

Finally, there are decisions in this report which will require additional manpower to accomplish. For example, special investigations are needed throughout the planning unit to locate significant plant and wildlife species. Implementation of these decisions will depend upon funding provided through the budget process.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is an integral part of the BLM planning program. This process requires that all interested citizens be given an opportunity to express their views and desires, raise specific issues, and explore the problems and opportunities of the various planning areas throughout the California Desert. The planning process also requires that citizens be involved at important decision points throughout the process of plan development.

Individuals and organizations were given the opportunity to participate at various stages in the process of planning the El Paso area. In the early stage, special workshops were held in Trona, Ridgecrest and Los Angeles for the purpose of identifying issues and surfacing specific concerns held by different segments of the public. Those present at these initial meetings represented a broad spectrum of interest in the El Paso area.

Contacts were made by BLM staff during the inventory stage of the program to obtain specialized information from knowledgeable individuals, special interest organizations and public agencies. A day long open house was held in California City, where BLM officials and resource specialists talked informally with the public amid displays which illustrated the resource data which had been collected.

Five thousand copies of the draft Management Framework Plan were mailed or given to individuals and to organizations for distribution to their membership. The draft plan for the El Paso and Red Mountain area generated substantial public discussion and comment. During the review period (October 1, 1975 to January 15, 1976), the Bureau received responses from almost 1600 individuals and 50 organizations, government agencies and universities. Response took many forms including letters, petitions, reports prepared by organizations, drawings submitted by elementary schools, mailgrams, and telegrams. The comments received from the public were tabulated by "issue categories" and made available to the public in a report titled "Summary of Public Review, Draft Management Framework Plan for National Resource Lands in El Paso/Red Mountain Planning Units".

The material received from the public was carefully analyzed. Issues, concerns and recommendations were extracted and categorized for direct consideration of BLM staff in preparing their final recommendations. As a result of this input, amendments to the draft plan were made.

This Management Framework Plan is the Bureau's official guide to the management decisions on national resource lands within the El Paso area. The Plan elements described herein reflect public input and a commitment by the Bureau to seriously consider the public interest as expressed through citizen participation. As this plan is reviewed and periodically amended to reflect new conditions, the public will again have the opportunity to participate in the plan amendment process.



Rendering by Alice Lord
San Bernardino, California

DEFINITIONS

GEOHERMAL ENERGY: The natural underground heat of the earth which can be delivered to the surface where it can be either changed to electrical energy or used as it is for heating (or cooling) buildings.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK: A Federal designation for historical and archaeological sites and structures judged to have exceptional value to the Nation as a whole rather than to a particular state or locality. Upon the owner's agreement to adhere to accepted preservation precepts, Landmark designation is recognized by the award of a bronze plaque and a certificate. The program is administered by the National Park Service under the authority of the National Historic Site Act.

NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARK: A designation for sites listed on the National Registry of Natural Landmarks. The registry contains geological or ecological values of such distinctive quality as to be of national significance. The objectives of the Natural Landmarks Program are (1) to encourage the preservation of sites illustrating the geological and ecological character of the United States, (2) to enhance the educational and scientific value of sites thus preserved, (3) to strengthen cultural appreciation of natural history, and (4) to foster a greater concern in the conservation of the Nation's natural heritage.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: A Federal register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects determined to be of local, state or national significance in American History, architecture, archaeology, and culture, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior under authority of section 2(b) of the National Historic Sites Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666, 16 U.S.C. 461) and section 101(a)(1) of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (80 Stat. 915, 16 U.S.C. 470).

PRIMITIVE AREA : Lands designated as primitive areas shall be administered for public recreational use in a manner to protect primitive values, and to: (a) allow the free operation of natural ecological succession to the extent feasible for scientific and other study, (b) preserve solitude, physical and mental challenge, inspiration and primitive recreation values, (c) preserve public values that would be lost if the lands were developed for commercial purposes or passed from Federal ownership, and (d) allow the natural restoration of the primitive character of the lands (see CFR 6221).

RESEARCH NATURAL AREA: These are established and maintained for the primary purpose of research and education. Scientists and educators are encouraged to use research natural areas in a manner that is nondestructive and consistent with the purpose for which the area is established. The general public may be excluded or restricted where necessary to protect studies or preserve research natural areas. Lands having the following characteristics may qualify: (1) Typical or unusual faunistic or floristic types, associations, or other biotic phenomena, or (2) Characteristic or outstanding geologic, pedologic, or aquatic features or processes.

SCENIC CORRIDOR - BUFFER ZONES: Scenic corridors may be established along roads and highways, rivers and streams, trails and other lands for the preservation, protection and enhancement of scenic and natural values. Size and use of scenic corridors shall be consistent with the purposes for which they are established. Natural values include varied and interesting land forms, flora and fauna within attractive native settings suitable for recreation in a natural environment and usually in combination with other uses (see CFR 6222).

Note: This designation does not apply any particular limitations on vehicle use or other uses which are specifically regulated by other designations.



Rendering by Alice Lord
San Bernardino, California

LANDS

INTRODUCTION

The El Paso Planning Unit is comprised of approximately 452,375 acres of public lands and 472,497 acres of private lands in eastern Kern County. It includes the communities of Mojave, Boron, Inyokern, Ridgecrest, Cantil, Garlock, Johannesburg, Randsburg and California City.

On the northeastern border of the unit, the China Lake Naval Weapons Center plays a major role in influencing urbanization and associated land development in and around Inyokern and Ridgecrest. California City to the southern end of the unit shows much potential for future urbanization. At the southwestern corner of the unit, Mojave lies astride a major east-west transportation route for both highway and rail traffic. Two major north-south utility corridors lie within the unit, paralleling Highways 14 and 395.

DECISIONS

- ★ 1. Analyze candidate communications sites for suitability for this purpose.

The demand for desert communication sites appears to be increasing yearly. Therefore, these sites should be evaluated for their suitability in meeting this demand. No commitment of a site will be made prior to completion of an evaluation study and an environmental analysis.

- ★ 2. Concentrate future utilities, such as power transmission lines, pipe lines, and telephone lines within a defined corridor paralleling the east side of Highway 178 north of Searles Lake. Route the existing power line to this corridor when the present right-of-way permit expires.

Potential geothermal development may necessitate the use of various utility lines both for service to the geothermal area and for exporting power from the area to demand points. By confining utilities to a predetermined north-south corridor, the possibility of a randomly-placed utility network within the planning unit will be avoided. With such direction, visual blight caused by haphazard installation of overhead utilities will be reduced to a minimum.

- ★ 3. Utilize the two existing major north-south utility corridors (paralleling Highways 14 and 395) for future routing of interstate and inter-regional power transmission lines, pipe lines, and telephone lines.

The use of these existing corridors would insure the minimum loss of visual, cultural, and natural resources as well as provide sufficient space for future utilities.

4. Inventory existing surface waters and hot springs and note on official land records as public water reserves.

Desert recreation is beginning to have an adverse impact on potable surface waters. Human activities such as camping, washing of eating accessories, and elimination of human waste in and around surface water resources, if continued, will pollute these surface waters and render them unusable for human as well as wildlife use. Withdrawal as public water reserves will prevent the private appropriation of these scarce waters and insure continued use by the public and by wildlife.

5. Retain approximately 18,000 acres of national resource lands west of the city of Ridgecrest.

The airspace above these lands is utilized by the U.S. Navy as a low altitude - high speed aircraft bombing test corridor. This area is of importance to the research and testing mission of the U.S. Navy. Furthermore, these lands will fall into the vehicle use classification of "Designated roads and trails". This is consistent with designations of surrounding lands.

- ★6. Review the withdrawal of approximately 640 acres of military lands currently contaminated by aerial gunnery ordnance. Explore with the U.S. Navy the feasibility of decontaminating this land. Should decontamination prove successful, utilize this land for exchange purposes to block up national resource land in public use areas or critical management areas.

This land, in its current condition, poses a potential hazard to the unknowing desert visitor due to the probable presence of live ordnance. In addition, this land is no longer utilized by the U.S. Navy.

- ★7. Approximately 26,806 acres of BLM land identified for disposal through private exchange will be utilized in acquiring private lands within the Desert Tortoise Preserve, the El Paso Mountains area, Walker Pass area, Owens Peak Primitive area, Black Mountain Primitive area, Sage Canyon and Horse Canyon area as well as the Dove Springs - Butterbread Canyon and Water Canyon area. Private lands in the Rand Off-Road Vehicle Use area will also be acquired.

National resource lands within the El Paso Planning Unit identified for exchange are isolated parcels which do not possess any known valuable or sensitive natural, cultural or recreational values. However, these parcels possess high value for exchange purposes due, in part, to their location and therefore, higher value for private development rather than retention and management.

The acquisition of private parcels within primitive and natural areas will insure protection of the sensitive natural and cultural resources which are contained within the boundaries of these areas.

The acquisition of some of these parcels would provide legal access to BLM lands which at present require traversing over private lands to gain access to BLM parcels.

Lands acquired in the Rand Off-Road Vehicle Use area would help prevent trespass problems and make the layout of off-road vehicle races more effective.

- ★8. Withdraw Castle Buttes for a rock collecting area. Withdraw from mineral entry and do validity examinations on existing claims. Explore the possibility of interagency cooperation (local and state) acquiring additional adjacent land for a future Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) transfer to a county or state entity. Designate the area for existing roads and trails.

This area is a popular camping and rockhounding area that should be retained in public ownership and dedicated to that type of use.

9. Investigate the feasibility, and initiate if appropriate, a land exchange program in the Butterbread/Jawbone Canyon area to improve the public land pattern for management and administrative effectiveness.

The present "checkerboard" ownership pattern encourages recreation trespass across private property and reduces the effectiveness of management efforts to implement wildlife habitat plans and recreation programs.

- ★ 10. **The approach zone of the Trona and Inyokern Airports will be identified as Airport Approach Zones and administrative procedures will be established to control the height of any proposed structures. Any applications for construction or concentration of public use in this area should be referred to FAA and local air authorities for review and recommendations.**

The Trona and Inyokern Airports provide essential transportation service to these remote desert communities. There has been an investment of public funds on improvements which are being increased to meet the transportation needs of the expanding communities.

11. **The right-of-way application issued to Kern-Round Company will be reviewed for possible termination.**

The right-of-way application was issued to the Kern-Round Company in 1900 for a power line through Walker Pass to Randsburg to serve the mining activities there. Field reconnaissance indicates that this power line does not exist, however, the Master Title Plat indicates the right-of-way as being current.

12. **BLM will discuss the possibility of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company relinquishing its preference right to public and private lands along the Southern Pacific right-of-way for station ground purposes.**

The need for this type of preference right appears to have outlived its usefulness. In addition, encumbrances to private land could be removed through BLM initiative in conjunction with affected private land owners.

13. **Occupancy trespass on public lands, especially in the El Paso Mountains, will be eliminated.**

Many occupancy trespasses are found in canyons which are subject to flooding. This flash flood situation presents a potential danger to persons occupying these areas. Many trespass occupancies effectively block access to the desert-using public who may wish to travel or hike in these areas. In addition, elimination of existing occupancy trespass problems would also eliminate the unfair advantage now being enjoyed by those illegally occupying public lands. Many of these occupancy trespasses lead to indiscriminate dumping and requests by the occupants for sanitation and utility rights-of-way.

14. **Isolated pockets of indiscriminate dumping will be removed from the national resource lands and the populace dissuaded from any further usage of national resource lands as convenient dump sites.**

Other than the obvious reasons of disease and fire prevention, unauthorized and indiscriminate dumping scars the environment aesthetically.

15. **All lands in the planning unit will remain classified for retention unless otherwise noted.**

Extremely limited water supplies, the limited amount of suitable acreage, and distance from markets are major constraints upon development of this opportunity. In addition, lands currently under agricultural use in the Cantil - Koehn Lake area may experience a decline in

the future due to the increasing expense and lack of water supplies. Further, national resource lands suitable for agriculture are classified for multiple use and therefore, segregated from agricultural entry.

16. National resource lands in this unit will not be used for urban expansion and development.

National resource lands are not needed for urban expansion. Given the large amount of undeveloped but vacant subdivided private land available for development within and adjacent to existing towns and cities, little demand for national resource lands for urban expansion exists within the planning unit. The existing towns and cities are presently served or will be served in the near future with sufficient public service necessary to sustain the existing and future population within the planning unit. In contrast, most of the national resource lands suitable for building sites lack all public service amenities necessary for sustaining a community.

17. Land simultaneously classified for Point Reyes Exchange and State Indemnity selection will be reviewed.

Public lands classified specifically as Point Reyes Exchange lands are no longer needed since the Point Reyes National Seashore is virtually all in public ownership or contracts have been signed for the purchase of existing private lands. In addition, the BLM has initiated a protective withdrawal on part of these lands for purposes of protecting the California Desert Tortoise. Therefore, lands classified as State Selection Lands conflict with this proposed withdrawal and with the protection of the California Desert Tortoise.

18. 3,126 acres of land currently classified for small tracts will be reclassified for exchange purposes.

These lands are currently in close proximity to developed or potentially expanding human settlement areas, adjacent to major transportation routes, and/or intermixed with private land. These intermixed high value lands near human settlement areas, which are difficult to manage, would be desirable as trading stock for private lands more suitable to the resource management mission of the BLM. In addition, all these small tract lands with exception of approximately 45 acres in T. 27 S., R. 40 E., are not classified for multiple use.

19. The Trona Railroad Company will be contacted in pursuit of relinquishment of the old Garden City Station.

A new Garden City siding has been established approximately one half mile from the old station. The need for this original preference right appears to have outlived its usefulness. The old station site has qualities that appear feasible for recreational development in this designated Off-Road Vehicle Open Area.

20. Apiary sites will be allowed in the areas that are presently used. Water will be supplied and maintained by permittee.

Historically these areas have been used for apiary sites. The only apparent problem from authorizing this use has been lack of water, caused by a dry well, etc. This has caused some local residency problems which can be eliminated with the proper coordination.





Rendering by Alice Lord
San Bernardino, California

GEOLOGY, ENERGY AND MINERALS

INTRODUCTION

In the planning unit, the Sierran, Mojavean and Great Basin geomorphic provinces intermingle, producing a variety of geologic and geomorphic features. Both the Sierra and Garlock Faults cut through the El Paso unit.

The area has been mined extensively since the discovery of gold in the area in 1863. Randsburg's Yellow Aster Mine yielded millions in gold in the 1890's. Searles Lake, first exploited for its mineral salts by John Searles a century ago, is today the nation's most important producer of saline minerals. It holds future potential for tungsten and lithium extractions. The increasing national need for new mineral and energy sources prompts renewed mining interest in the area, as well as a search for geothermal energy.

DECISIONS

21. Encourage through cooperation with state and local governments and mining operators: (a) mitigation of pollution and other forms of environmental disturbance and (b) rehabilitation of open pits, as reasonably as possible, to their premineral status (both topographically and vegetatively).

Mineral resources needed to satisfy local and national demand should be developed with the least possible environmental impact.

22. Give active consideration to solar and wind energy development within this planning unit. Way stations or any other sizeable buildings proposed and planned should be built so that full use is made of the solar and wind energy potential.

In view of the national energy effort and the abundance of solar energy in this planning unit, development of such buildings will be a step forward towards energy self-sufficiency. It is possible that expenditures for heating and cooling will be reduced.

23. Assess the Garlock Fault in its entirety on national resource land. Select the best example of its surface manifestation and nominate to the Register of National Landmarks.

Major geologic formations do not require the degree of protection afforded by Natural Area designation. Inclusion in the National Landmarks system appears to be adequate to insure the surface integrity. The area has existing off-road vehicle designations which will prevent destruction of the surface manifestations of the "fault".

- ★ 24. Open the Koehn Lake area to mineral leasing with consideration for existing wildlife and cultural values.

This area is mineral in character and has high potential for leasable minerals.

25. With the exception of the areas recommended for withdrawal from the operation of the Mining Act of 1872, i.e., Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, Black Mountain Primitive Area, Owens Peak Primitive Area, Cerro Coso Research Natural Area and Argus Mountain

Primitive Area, the El Paso planning unit should remain open for mineral exploration and development.

Most of the area has been actively explored for minerals in the past, indicating a very high degree of mineralization, especially the Randsburg - El Paso Mountain areas.

- ★ 26. Allow use of identified sand and gravel sites as shown in the plan, until they are depleted.

Analysis reveals that the identified sites can be utilized without serious impairment of other values.

27. Proceed with the processing of geothermal lease applications in the Searles Lake area.

Approval of leases in this area would have the least adverse impact upon other resource values. Energy priorities are set to encourage energy related exploration and retain maximum public values in terms of scenic, recreational and natural resources.



RANGE AND VEGETATIVE PRODUCTS

INTRODUCTION

Approximately ninety percent of the surface area of the planning unit is grazed by cattle or sheep under a system of permits and leases administered by the BLM. While much of the range is now in fair to poor condition, new and better range management methods promise improvement of range and wildlife habitat quality in the future.

There are four grazing allotments in this planning unit. Traditionally two have been used for cattle, one for cattle and sheep and one for sheep. Highway 14 is generally used as a dividing line between perennial and annual forage in this area.

DECISIONS

28. Correlate factors of annual plant density, plant volume, soil moisture and air temperature to determine turn-out dates and numbers in issuing licenses and leases on ephemeral range areas.

Watershed quality, wildlife forage production, recreation quality and long-range livestock forage production capability are adversely affected by poorly managed grazing. A more precise method of determining the potential for ephemeral forage production will allow management personnel to minimize or eliminate conflicts. Site located studies will allow for more accurate predictions over time.

29. Retain the ephemeral range classification on the area east of Highway 14, and designate the class of livestock as sheep. Keep sheep bedding and watering locations at least ¼ mile away from main highways through management stipulations.

Perennial forage production is low. Ephemeral forage production potential is high. Spring sheep grazing, properly managed, exerts less pressure on perennial plants than cattle grazing. Excluding grazing within 1/4 mile of paved highways will protect sheep herders, motorists and the sheep, from injury by auto accident, and will provide for undisturbed floral display areas along thoroughfares.

30. Develop an intensive livestock management plan for all range use areas west of Highway 14. Establish proper grazing system and execute exchange of use agreements for specified private lands. In the interim, custodial management should be allowed at the capacity determined by the forage inventory in the Unit Resource Analysis. Annual flexibility will be determined each year.

Development of an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) is of high priority in this area and is emphasized by this planning decision. The effects of the National Resources Defense Council suit will require an Environmental Impact Statement prior to implementing the Allotment Management Plan.

Current range use is flexible according to forage development. The capacity determination should fit the livestock operation on a year to year basis.

31. Authorize grazing use of ephemeral forage between the Los Angeles Aqueducts and Highway 14 only to the extent possible without damage to perennial species. This area will ultimately be part of an Allotment Management Plan. Utilization of ephemeral forage will conform with the plan when it is developed.

Ephemeral forage is a valuable resource product which should be utilized to maximize live-stock production. However, perennial plants are higher in quality for forage production and watershed protection and should be protected and encouraged (BLM Manual 4112.53B, Ephemeral-Perennial Range).

32. Locate and establish exclosure study plots in representative range or habitat types throughout the planning unit with priority given the canyon areas along the west boundary of the unit. Establish vegetative studies, including photo/trend plots and exclosures in key areas giving added weight to those areas which are also important for wildlife, wildflower, archaeology and recreation.

The study plots that will be established in connection with Allotment Management Plans will measure vegetative response to managed grazing. Exclosures would compare the rate of recovery under complete protection to the rate of recovery under controlled grazing. In many cases, an exclosure can also be used to protect other key values. This may reduce the total number of study exclosures and the total costs.

33. Several areas within the planning unit are considered critical range and wildlife habitat. There is need for immediate attention with proper management practices and development of long-range studies. The following identifies the areas and provides guides for implementation.

There are three canyons in serious and rapidly deteriorating condition: Indian Wells, Horse, and Sage Canyon; and two canyons in good condition: Short Canyon and Sand Canyon.

a. (1) Indian Wells Canyon

Objective: Improve productivity of the range, protect and improve key wildlife habitat, and improve scenic qualities.

Decisions: Construct exclosures and establish permanent study plots for determining the current and future production potentials. This will be correlated with Range and Vegetative Products decision 32.

There is a downward and deteriorating trend in range condition, as evidenced by the present composition of the vegetation, the lack of vigor of the more palatable species, and the evidence of recent terrace development.

b. (2 & 3) Horse and Sage Canyons

Objective: To halt rapid deterioration of a productive range area and to improve productivity of the range; to protect and improve key wildlife habitats; and to improve scenic qualities.

Decisions:

1. Use information gained from the enclosure and trend study plots in Indian Wells Canyon to determine production potential in Horse and Sage Canyons.
2. Limit camping to specified areas. Post designated camping areas and designated roads. Post signs to discourage off-road vehicle use.

There is a downward and deteriorating trend in range and soil conditions as evidenced by the present composition of vegetation, vigor of palatable species, and the erosion scars resulting from the influx of off-road vehicle activity.

c. (4) Short Canyon

Objective: To manage Short Canyon to preserve its good range conditions.

Decision: Information will be gathered with regards to range resources for the development of an Allotment Management Plan. Future management, which may be different from the past, will be specified in the Allotment Management Plan.

This canyon is currently in good condition, although the canyon bottom has been impacted by construction of the second barrel of the Los Angeles Aqueduct. We are concerned that this canyon remain in good condition, that it be managed much as it has in the past, and that it not deteriorate like neighboring Indian Wells and Sand Canyons. Management should be oriented toward maintaining scenic displays of wildflowers and toward controlling and limiting impacts from campers and from parking.

d. (5) Sand Canyon

Objective: The preservation of Charlotte's Phacelia (Phacelia nashiana).

Decision: Develop an intensive livestock management plan. Preservation of the rare plant may be accomplished by a grazing management system and selected exclosures, or elimination of grazing.

The objective of preserving the rare plant and its habitat is acceptable and will be incorporated into the grazing system design.

- e. Use will be made of "natural" exclosures to determine current and future potential of the range. A prime example of a "natural" exclosure is the fenced right-of-way bordering Highway 14. Permanent trend study plots will be established as soon as possible in and adjacent to representative areas in these and other "natural" exclosures.

★ 34. Protect sites in the following locations for rare plant species:

Charlotte's Phacelia
(Phacelia nashiana)

Sand Canyon
Jawbone Canyon
Water Canyon
Cinco Area

Kern Primrose
(Camissonia kernensis kernensis)

Scaley Stemmed Sand Plant
(Pholisma arenarium)

Hermit Cactus
(Sclerocactus polyancistrus)

Fiddleneck
(Amsinkia vernicosa)

Freeman Canyon
El Paso Peaks
Dove Well (1 ½ mile west)

Cerro Coso Area
Tortoise Area

Black Mountain
Iron Canyon

Water Canyon
Dove Spring Mill (1 mile east)

Fiddleneck (Amsinkia vernicosa) is on the endangered list and is protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The other four species are on the California Native Plant Society List of rare plants. The agency policy is to take the protective measures necessary to prevent rare species from becoming threatened species.

35. Specific actions for feral burro management in Argus and Slate Ranges will be developed in coordination with the overall burro management program. In preparing these recommendations, the Unit Resource Analysis data for the Red Mountain/El Paso Planning Units will be consulted.

This Planning Unit contains only small portions of the ranges being adversely impacted by this animal and current efforts to develop a coordinated burro management plan should be completed without regard to unit boundaries.



Rendering by Alice Lord
San Bernardino, California

SOIL AND WATERSHED

INTRODUCTION

Soils differ in their appearance, composition, productivity, and management requirements even within short distances. These differences are the results of the interaction of many soil-forming factors among which are: (1) parent materials, (2) relief, (3) climate, (4) living organisms, and (5) time. The relative effect of each of these factors varies within each soil. The majority of the soils in the El Paso area are poorly developed soils because of lack of moisture. They tend to be alkaline because most of the moisture evaporates and leaves dissolved salts.

The erosion condition at the present time varies from slight to severe with the majority of the area in the moderate to severe stage. Although the present erosion condition shows large areas in the critical to severe stage, the trend is fairly static. The stage of the erosion condition is the result of climatic forces over a long period of time. Flooding can occur whenever there are cloudbursts in the eastern portion of Kern County. The path of flooding is usually well established so damage is kept to a minimum.

Watershed values must be considered in all activities and proper restrictions or stipulations incorporated into proposals and permits.

DECISIONS

36. Protect all watershed areas, especially areas which are susceptible to severe erosion by impact, by limiting uses which will disturb vegetation and the soil surface.

These are areas of steep slopes, shallow and/or highly erodable soils. Disturbance of these areas will accelerate erosion, increasing sediment problems. Disruption of surface cover increases run-off which reduces the amount of water going into the ground water system.

37. Control surface activities which will deteriorate water supply.

Prevent dumping of harmful products which might enter the ground water system. Ground water is the only source of water for this area and any deterioration of this water supply would have a negative impact. Wells should be located to intercept the ground water moving toward the playas thus reducing total discharge and maintaining the water quality.

38. Endorse and assist other agencies which have programs to prevent water quality deterioration.

The U. S. Geologic Survey and California Department of Water Resources have programs of water quality investigation. The U. S. Geologic Survey is conducting a study of the ground water in Indian Wells Valley to detect any changes or trends in hydrologic conditions that may affect the water supply. This study is being supported by the Indian Wells Valley County Water District, Kerr-McGee Chemical Corporation and China Lake Naval Weapons Center.

39. Road standards will be established which would minimize erosion hazards. They will include guidelines on (a) location, and (b) design (grade, side slope drainage, etc.) for both future and existing roads.

Large parts of these planning units have steep slopes and shallow soils which are very erodable. General road standards are as follows: road width should be a minimum of 12 feet; grade should be between 2-10 percent (10-14 percent grade could be maintained if surfacing is done to minimize erosion and improve traction); cross slope should be 50 percent or less; drainage should be considered by (a) outslope 4-6 percent to outside only in areas where possible (stable soils), (b) inslope sloping into a ditch, and (c) crown section - inslope and outslope to minimize run-off. Also culverts and graded dips should be installed where needed.

40. Reduce damages by flood and sediments on roads and highways by improving drainageways and limiting use in areas susceptible to severe erosion by wind and water.

Some roads in these areas are affected by flood and sediments. Dust caused restricted vision on the highways is a safety problem in some areas. Water spreading structures would slow the water run-off and reduce gullyng and sediment deposition on the roads. Proper culverts should prevent wash-outs and sediment problems on the roads and highways.

41. Encourage miners, developers and other users of the desert to consider the environment in their work and recreation.

This planning unit has a high percentage of soils severely susceptible to erosion by impact. The scraping and digging from mining, mining exploration and assessment work denudes the soil of vegetative cover and disrupts surface conditions making it more susceptible to erosion. Keep lines of communication open with miners so that suggestions by the BLM are considered in their operations.



RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

Nearness to the San Fernando Valley/Los Angeles megalopolis coupled with warm, sunny skies, open space and a variety of interesting and unusual natural features make the El Paso Planning Unit one of California's most popular desert playgrounds.

The hills and flat lands of this unit have become increasingly popular with motorcycle and other off-road vehicular enthusiasts who come to play and engage in competitive events.

Many vistas are available in this unit and draw many photographers and painters. Vertebrate fossils and Indian artifacts are illegally collected in some areas. Rockhounds collect petrified wood, and other semi-precious gemstones which have been washed out of mountain rock formations.

DECISIONS

- ★ 42. A way station and mobile intermittent field contact stations will be planned and implemented in the future. The way station will be located at the junction of Highway 14 and the Randsburg - Mojave Road (California City Blvd). Field contact stations will be located intermittently throughout the unit with no firm locations designated at this time.

This location for a way station appears best due to traffic flow patterns in the area as determined from Cal-Trans data. Places and times for mobile intermittent field contact stations must be developed on an annual basis.

43. A general recreation - interpretive guide to the planning unit will be prepared to maximize user satisfaction and opportunities for recreation and resource understanding.

This guide will (a) identify principal sightseeing features, (b) describe the area's geology, history, archaeology and natural history, (c) identify locations best suited to outdoor recreation opportunities, (d) identify designated roads and trails and national resource lands, and (e) inform visitors about desert safety, hazards on public lands, and rights of the private land-owners.

44. Rock and mineral collecting (rockhounding) areas will be protected from commercial removal of materials.

In order to preserve rockhounding opportunities for the longest possible time, surveillance of the areas will be scheduled to prevent the commercial exploration of the minerals.

45. Natural springs and waters on national resource lands in the unit will be protected and maintained to maximize hunting and bird watching opportunities and to provide livestock water. Water will be tested annually as to potability. The California Department of Fish and Game will be requested to enforce, on an occurrence basis, the camping restrictions related to wild-life watering places.

Desert species must find water at a limited number of springs. Disturbance, pollution, and appropriation of springs for other purposes can have adverse effects upon wildlife and game

populations. Seeps and springs can be developed for dual purposes. Livestock water can be piped away from the source and the source protected to provide maximum habitat values.

46. A selective roadside and highway signing program will be developed to identify recreation areas and significant sightseeing-interpretive features. Signs will be designed to be unobtrusive.

A sign program will enhance public enjoyment of public lands and will assist the BLM in defining its role as custodian of the national resource lands. This will also assist photographers and painters by informing them of locations and their names. Unobtrusive signs will minimize the visual disturbance of their placement.

47. A mapping and strategic system of marking or signing desert roads and trails at major access points will be undertaken for the management of vehicle use.

This program will protect resources while guiding users to the best recreation opportunities on national resource lands.

48. Scenic intrusions located throughout the unit will be removed or modified through rehabilitation. These include mining scars, illegal and unnecessary signs, abandoned autos, junk piles and litter.

Removal and/or rehabilitation of intrusions will do much to further the scenic quality of the planning units. Historically significant intrusions are expected, and will be evaluated prior to any action.

49. A comprehensive physical protection program for fragile and irreplaceable natural-cultural features such as petroglyphs, geological formations, historic sites, botanical areas and rare or endangered species will be developed.

Efficient protection of desert recreation resources can be effected only by a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the needs and the development of a plan for protection with establishment of priorities, determination of means, and schedule of implementation.

50. A study of users, campers and picnickers, will be undertaken in the desert-facing canyons and the El Paso Mountains to determine their needs and preferences in terms of the possible establishment of campgrounds and picnic areas.

Desert-facing canyons and the El Paso Mountains are used by campers and picnickers. Eventual establishment of campground and picnic areas to protect resources and serve users seems essential, but further study is necessary to select the most suitable sites and the degree of campground development.

51. Environmental Study Plots shall be established and monitored in heavy use recreation areas in order to assess environmental impact trends of recreational activities. Special attention shall be given to long range assessment of off-road vehicle impacts and to an evaluation of the practicality of the rest-rotation concept in off-road vehicle management.

Study plots are essential to the development of trend data which in turn directs management toward the wisest allocation and use of recreation resources.

52. A brochure will be prepared with a map of hiking and equestrian trails and areas in the planning unit to identify these opportunities to the public. These brochures could be available at way stations, field contact stations, district offices and at local business establishments in the desert community.

The potential hiking public has little knowledge of desert values and hiking opportunities in the California Desert. Brochures, signs, and landmark locators would do much to encourage and enhance hiking opportunities. Only the Pacific Crest Trail is currently planned and is by law a hiking and equestrian trail. Other opportunities will be defined pending development of recreation activity plans in the unit.

- ★ 53. An off-road vehicle management agreement line through Butterbread and Jawbone Canyons will be adopted. On the east side of the line a cooperative agreement with the private landowner will be implemented to assist BLM in enforcement of vehicle use limitations in this area. On the west side of the line, vehicle use will be by permit only. Management is not currently capable of implementing a formal permit system at this time. However, long-term objectives may warrant a simple permit system to regulate use. In the interim, a close working coordination with the private landowner will be maintained.

The "checkerboard" land pattern has created management problems for both the Bureau and the dominant private landowner, the Rudnick Estate Trust. This agreement would authorize the Bureau to manage off-road vehicle activity on the alternate sections of private land east of the agreement line. This is the area most in need of comprehensive recreational planning. In turn, the area lying west of the line will be managed by the Rudnick Estate Trust and recreational activity will be kept to a minimum.

This is an interim management measure proposed by the "Jawbone Special Design Committee" pending a major land exchange program. Note that this plan recommends a land exchange program be initiated in this area (see Lands Section).

- ★ 54. Work will be undertaken with the State Highway Department in developing plans for scenic overlooks at the following locations:
- a. The junction of Highway 395 and the road to Randsburg (north junction).
 - b. The broad pull-out along Highway 395 one mile north of the junction with the Garlock Road.
 - c. The junction of Highway 395 and the road to Ridgecrest.
 - d. Opal Mountain, approximately one mile east of the junction of Highway 14 and the Red Rock-Inyokern Road.
 - e. Slate Pass north of Searles Lake.

Overlooks can be readily developed with a minimum of time and expense, yet bring enjoyment and awareness of desert values to thousands of recreationists and motorists.

55. An auto guide to the sights and features of the planning unit will be prepared and made available to motorists at district BLM offices, way stations, field contact stations, local businesses and through auto clubs. Roadside signs and exhibits will be installed at points of particular interest, such as the Garlock Fault, Los Angeles Aqueduct, Black Mountain, Last Chance Canyon, Tortoise Area, etc. Signs will be kept to a minimum due to maintenance problems, and emphasis will be placed on brochures and maps.

Nationally, driving for pleasure has been at or near the top of the popularity list of outdoor recreation activities for years.

- ★ 56. The Bureau will continue to give priority to the completion of the Pacific Crest Trail as an important recreation facility in this planning unit. A detailed Recreation Activity Plan for the Pacific Crest Trail and related facilities such as water, primitive camp sites, trail heads, feeder trails, etc., will be completed. There is a need for providing feeder trail access from desert-facing canyons in this planning unit. Feeder trails which will provide access to desert communities and recreation areas west of the planning unit will be considered.

The Pacific Crest Trail will become a major regional recreational trail with substantial future use.

57. The Bureau will review the agreement with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in hopes of finding some way to repair surface disturbance along the new Los Angeles Aqueduct. Rehabilitation will take place only after feasibility studies are completed and reveal significant rehabilitation is possible.

Surface disturbance along the Los Angeles Aqueduct constitutes a major impact upon the natural landscape.

58. The Bureau will continue to eliminate graffiti on rocks throughout the planning unit.

Spray-painted graffiti has degraded the scenic and aesthetic quality of the natural scene and serves to encourage similar acts of vandalism.

59. Future transmission line towers and other facilities erected within the unit will be located and constructed of material or painted in such a way as to mitigate their adverse impacts upon the visual scene.

Methods and materials are available which reduce scenic impacts of transmission towers and other unsightly facilities. They should be employed wherever possible.

- ★ 60. Establish an Owens Peak Primitive Area to preserve the primitive values of the area as well as significant natural and cultural values.

- a. A request will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal.

This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.

- b. Vehicle use will be eliminated.
- c. Private land will be acquired within the area.
- d. Man made intrusions will be removed.
- e. Man made landscape scars will be rehabilitated where practicable.
- f. A grazing system will be developed to minimize and mitigate grazing impacts.
- g. The possibility of extending the primitive area northward to Nine Mile Canyon will be considered in the Darwin Management Plan.

The area is virtually roadless and undisturbed and its crest line is traversed by the Pacific Crest Trail. The area includes high, forested ridges with excellent long range vistas, interesting desert-facing canyons, and ecotones where Sierran and desert plant and animal species occur. With the completion of the Pacific Crest Trail, use of this area is expected to substantially increase. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation estimates an increase of primitive area use of almost 900 percent between 1960 and the year 2000. Equestrian opportunity will be enhanced without conflict.

- 61. Vehicles used on the designated road and trail system will be equipped with mufflers as required by the California Highway Patrol and the California Vehicle Code. Vehicles used in fire hazard areas will also be equipped with spark arrestors approved by the U.S. Forest Service.**

This system allows vehicular access to the area with a minimum impact upon such values as scenery, vegetation, solitude, watershed and wildlife. Mufflers and spark arrestors will reduce the chances of man-caused wildfires. Ample trails and open desert area will be available to horseback riders.

- ★ **62. Establish Scenic Corridors as shown on map; and a Scenic Corridor feasibility study will be implemented along the Garlock Road from Highway 14 to Randsburg and to Highway 395; land uses along the corridor will be consistent with visual amenities. Discussions with the State and County will be undertaken regarding scenic easements and/or necessary zoning to implement the corridor on private land. This scenic corridor will not be withdrawn and does not exclude off-road vehicle activity and recreational camping.**

The Scenic Corridor designation would help protect the natural and scenic values of Fremont Valley. This valley is popular with sightseeing visitors who enjoy viewing the panoramic scenes of colorful and impressive desert terrain.

- ★ **63. Establish the Argus Mountain Primitive area to preserve the natural, primitive and unique diversity of plant and animal life in the area.**

- a. Man made intrusions will be removed.
- b. Man made landscape scars will be rehabilitated where practicable.
- c. Vehicle use will be designated closed.
- d. Private land will be acquired within the area.
- e. A request will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.

The mapped area is roadless, near pristine. Because the Argus Range lies at the junction of the Mojave and Great Basin Deserts, there is a unique diversity of plant and animal life. This characteristic makes the area significant to the academic community as well as to the recreating public. Feral burros have depressed the productive capability of the range for native wildlife including the California bighorn sheep. Control of the feral burro and the management of recreation use will protect the natural and primitive values in the area.

- ★ 64. Designate a portion of the Great Falls Basin area as a Research Natural Area. Recreation, wildlife activity, and an archaeological protection plan will be developed.

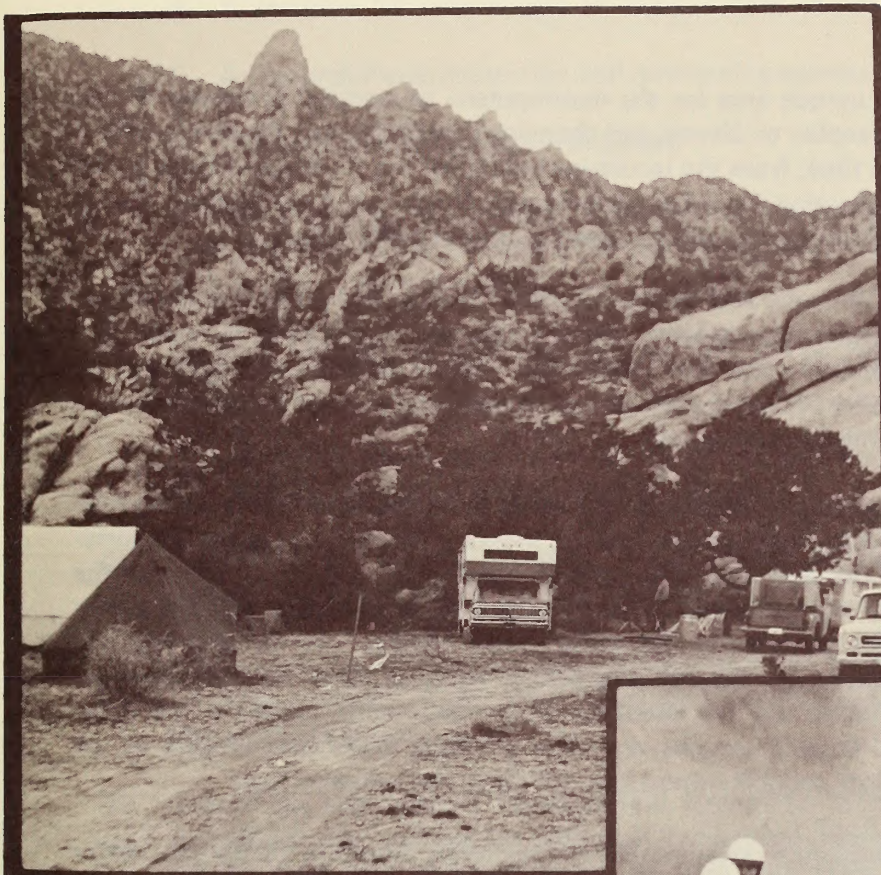
The Great Falls Basin area of the Argus Range lies at the junction of the Mojave and Great Basin Deserts. This helps give this area its unique diversity of plant and animal life. This characteristic also makes the area significant to the academic community as well as to the recreating public.

65. Old pipe and junk will be removed from the canyons and abandoned homesites in the Argus Range, especially from below the falls and along the trail to Great Falls Basin. Graffiti on the rocks at the falls site will be obliterated. Care will be exercised to avoid elimination of articles of historic significance. Regular patrols will be established to pick up litter and protect the resources in this very unique area.

The scenic quality of the area in the Argus Range is impaired by the clutter of junk and litter. The removal will enhance and maintain the scenic quality of this area.

66. Off-road vehicle use will be managed in accordance with the off-road vehicle designations and definitions shown on the Management Framework Plan map.

The original designations, established in 1973 by the Interim Critical Management Plan for Recreational Vehicles, were based upon very limited knowledge of resource data. During the planning process for this planning unit, substantially more detailed data was collected, additional public input was received and more careful analysis was given to the specific alternatives and effects of off-road vehicle use. As a result of these studies, decisions were made to change some of the original Interim Critical Management Plan designations.



CULTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The El Paso Planning Unit offers a unique area for the development of research problems delving into the adaptations of aboriginal peoples to diverse and changing environments. The environment of prehistoric man changed, through time, from the lacustrine habitat of the Pleistocene lakes to the dry desert habitat of today. Also affecting the living environment, is the varied topography, changing from the high Sierra Nevadas and Sierra foothills to desert mountains and valleys.

As is the case throughout most of California, and particularly so in deserts, little is known about the total cultural resource base. Prehistoric chronologies are extrapolated across wide expanses, and surveys have historically been limited in scope and orientation. Major research questions for the El Paso area, include trying to establish and define the extent of early man within the area and how he adapted to the desiccation of the Pleistocene lakes.

There is an abundance of rock art throughout the area that needs to be studied in terms of the relationships to major changes in the environment and to changes in man's tool kit, i.e., there is a correlation between the introduction of the bow and arrow and an increase in rock art. A study of the seasonal round and a comparison of the utilization of the Sierra Nevada life zones and the desert mountain and valley zones could be centered in the Indian Wells Valley. As the area has two major passes over the Sierra Nevadas on its western boundary, a study of trade relations between desert peoples and central valley peoples and the effect it had on the material culture of the intervening groups, is suggested. The El Paso Mountains also offer a unique study area because of the high density of cultural remains and its possible importance for historical Indian groups.

The area also played a part in the historical development of California, especially in the late 1800's during the Gold Rush days. Randsburg, Red Mountain, Garlock, Johannesburg, are all rich in historical data and contain unique opportunities for interpretation. Major trade and transportation routes to the silver and gold mines of Cerro Gordo and Panamint Mountains passed through the area.

The Los Angeles Aqueduct, one of the great engineering feats of the early 1900's passes through the El Paso Planning Unit on its journey to its southern terminus in the San Fernando Valley. It played a vital role in the development not only of Los Angeles but also of the desert and Owens Valley and continues to do so today.

DECISIONS

67. Organize an orderly program for inventory, evaluation, recording, protection, salvage and mitigation on archaeological resources. The following specific needs have been identified:
 - a. Specific attention should be given to cultural resources in lands reports, technical reports and land use permit processing.
 - b. A complete filing system.
 - c. A systematic inventory and evaluation program, including field test sampling.
 - d. A relative archaeological rating system.

- e. A program for nomination of suitable sites to the National Register of Historic Places.
- f. A comprehensive protection and monitoring system.
- g. A salvage and/or mitigation program.

Cultural resources, as a specific management activity, is a recent concept. Procedures have not been fully developed to maximize the public values and comply with the existing laws and regulations on these resources.

68. Support and assist a local and Bureau wide public education program regarding cultural resources.

The most effective long-term means to protect cultural resources, to reduce vandalism, and to benefit from the past is through public education.

69. Initiate an oral history program. "Old Timers" should be interviewed by Bureau personnel and their recollections of the past recorded on tape.

The human interest aspect of the Bureau's interpretive program will benefit from the accounts of older residents of this area. Their personal experiences will also shed new light on places and events of historic significance.

70. Encourage and support intensive and systematic archaeological research including survey, excavation and analysis by reputable institutions making use of Antiquities Act Permits as a management tool. Excavation will be done only when the need is clearly stated and in compliance with federal procedures.

Archaeological work in the area suffers from inadequate funding and lack of long-term planning of scientific objectives and methods. Most of the work that has been conducted has been ill-coordinated and little of what has been done has resulted in usable information either for scientific or interpretive purposes. Until this is amended, the full scientific and public value of the area's cultural resources will not be realized. Full utilization of Antiquities Act Permits provides the Bureau with one of the most effective means for properly managing archaeological and historical work on national resource lands.

- ★ 71. Manage the El Paso Mountain area to protect the scenic, natural, cultural and recreational values.
- a. Limit vehicular use within the El Paso Mountain area to a designated system of roads carefully selected to provide reasonable user access, protect fragile resources, maintain some feeling of expanse and solitude, and limit parking and camping to designated areas only.
 - b. Remove unnecessary intrusions and rehabilitate landscape scars where practicable.
 - c. Post and prohibit camping within 200 yards at water sources and guzzlers under California Department of Fish and Game Title 14, Sections 308.5 and 730.

- d. Provide trained field personnel (e.g., desert rangers), especially during high use periods, to conduct patrols and to supervise use. Resident personnel and/or 24 hour visitor use supervision may be necessary.
- e. Develop an interpretive program for the cultural and natural resource consistent with the recreation area's management needs.
- f. Initiate systematic archaeological test sampling of the following archaeological sites: Ker-22, Ker-27, EP-45.
- ★ g. Designate the Black Mountain/Black Hills area as a Primitive Area. Prepare and submit a request to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.
- h. Update and revise the present Last Chance Canyon Archaeological District, a property on the National Register of Historic Places, to more accurately conform to the cultural resource and to develop a specific management plan for the property.
- i. Investigate the historic sites and features within the boundaries of Last Chance Canyon Archaeological District for inclusion with the present National Register listing or for nomination as separate sites or districts.
- j. Evaluate Schmidt's Tunnel for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The El Paso Mountains offer an outstanding variety of natural features. Recreation area designation would promote sound management goals and afford official recognition of the area's scenic and geological features. Much of this area is on the National Register of Historic Places as a result of the high archaeological values. Increased visitor use involving collecting, off-road vehicle operation, and camping needs to be closely regulated to insure protection of the area's vulnerable features. Indiscriminate collecting and off-road vehicle play have had significant adverse effects upon the area.

72. Nominate the Koehn Dunes Archaeological District to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Koehn Dunes Archaeological District meets the criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Protection of this valuable area is necessary.

73. Protect the Willow Spring Archaeological Site by the following actions:

- a. Nominate the Willow Spring Archaeological Site to the National Register of Historic Places.
- b. Barricade vehicular access to petroglyphs at Willow Spring.

The Willow Spring Archaeological Site appears to meet the criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Nomination, supervision, and barricading vehicular access would afford the site needed protection.

74. Protect the Boulder Canyon Archaeological District by the following actions:

- a. Nominate the Boulder Canyon Archaeological District to the National Register of Historic Places.
- b. Conduct systematic test sampling at Ker-226 (Boulder Canyon Village Site).
- c. Develop a plan with the private landowner to barricade the dirt road into the Boulder Canyon Village Site and/or fence (barbed wire or drift) the immediate site area.
- d. Develop an interpretive program for the Boulder Canyon Village Site.
- e. Develop a cooperative management agreement with the private landowner.

The Boulder Canyon Archaeological District meets the criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and is in need of protection. Cooperative agreements are required because of land ownership pattern, part of the district is on private property.

75. Encourage investigation of the historic site of Randsburg, and/or select buildings and features on national resource land within the immediate vicinity of the Randsburg townsite, for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and recording on the Historical American Buildings Survey, and cooperate in preservation and management.

Section 2(a) of Executive Order 11593 requires that all federal agencies locate, inventory and nominate all cultural properties under their jurisdiction or control that appear to qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Investigation of this possibility is in compliance with this order. The Historical American Building Survey, a program administered by the National Park Service and coordinated in cooperation with American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress, provides a national record of buildings which are of historic and cultural significance.

76. Investigate Freeman's Junction, historically known as Coyote Holes Station as a possible historical site nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Coyote Holes Station may qualify for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. However, little field information is available to make this determination. Field examination to assess the property's integrity is necessary.

77. Investigate the Los Angeles Aqueduct and/or related sites on national resource lands as a possible candidate for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Los Angeles Aqueduct and/or related sites may meet the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

78. Evaluate the Cow Heaven Archaeological Site for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Cow Heaven Archaeological Site may meet the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

79. **Contact the National Park Service to officially define the boundaries of Walker Pass National Historic Landmark, and assist National Park Service by identifying manageable boundaries and by submitting proposed boundaries to the California State Historic Preservation Officer for review and comment.**

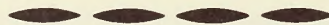
The Historic Sites Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666) gives the National Park Service the responsibility for defining boundaries for all historic districts that have been designated National Historic Landmarks. Since the boundaries of the Walker Pass National Historic Landmark have never been determined and much of Walker Pass is national resource lands, and since the BLM needs specific boundaries delineated for management purposes, the National Park Service should be requested to make the boundary determination. The BLM should work closely with National Park Service in delineating the boundaries and coordinate the program with the California State Historic Preservation Officer.

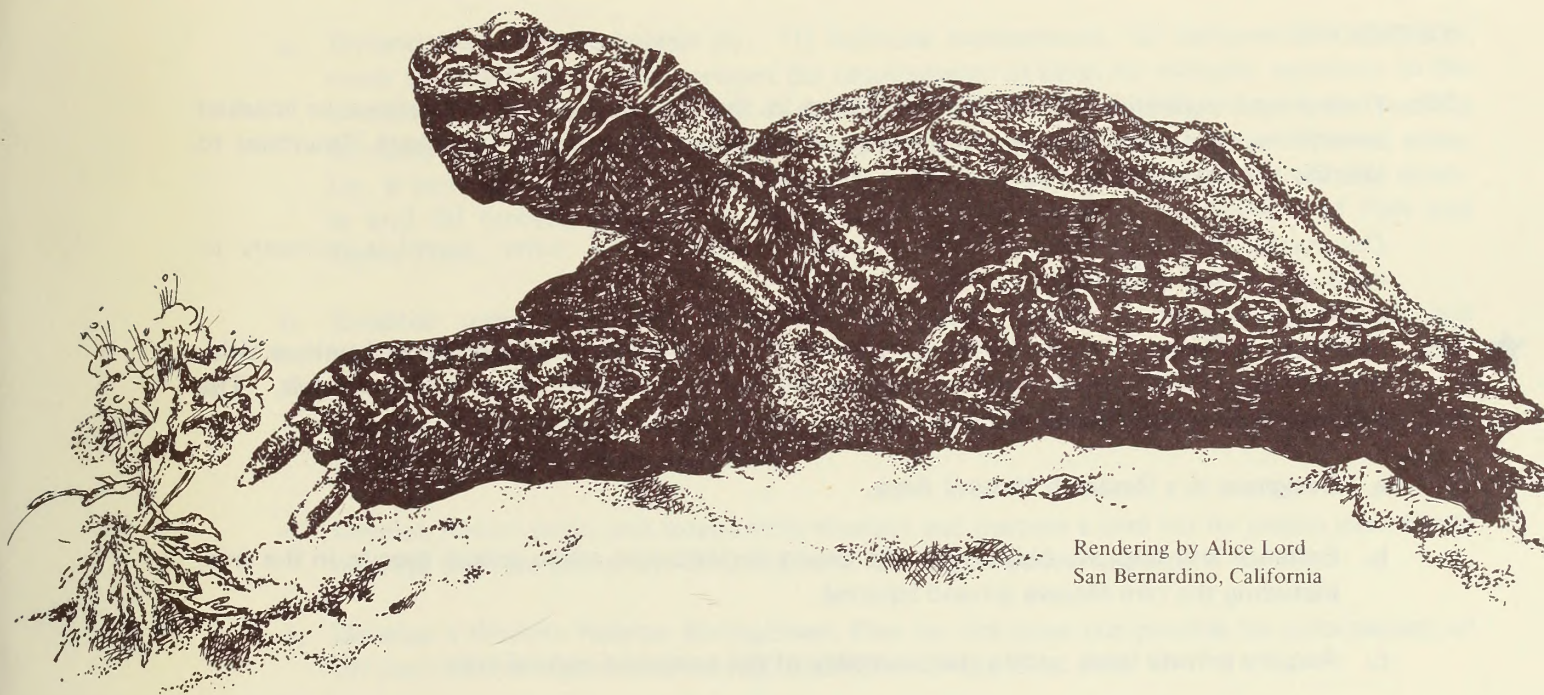
80. **Evaluate the Dove Springs and Cross Mountain Archaeological Areas for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.**

This site may qualify for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

- ★ 81. **Coordinate nomination of the Twenty Mule Team Borax Road to the National Register of Historic Places with other appropriate governmental offices and agencies including the National Park Service (Death Valley National Monument) and the California State Department of Parks and Recreation.**

The Twenty Mule Team Borax Road would qualify for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. However, the Road crosses a variety of land ownerships including national resource lands and Death Valley National Monument. Therefore, the BLM needs to coordinate nomination of the entire road with the National Park Service and follow the nomination procedures outlined by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.





Rendering by Alice Lord
San Bernardino, California

INTRODUCTION

The El Paso Planning Unit is located in the northern Mojave Desert and is bounded by the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains on the west, and the southern reaches of the Great Basin plateau to the north, thus giving the planning unit a great variety of wildlife habitats.

Approximately 400 species of animals have been recorded in 17 different habitat types, which include at least three species of amphibians, 46 species of reptiles, 200 species of resident birds, 70 species of migratory birds and 89 species of mammals.

The establishment of natural areas and other projects related to the conservation of wildlife resources will become increasingly more important as more and more land is developed for other uses. Such conservation efforts need public support at all stages of development if our wildlife legacy is to be saved for future generations.

Responding to the need to protect habitat for the desert tortoise, Mojave ground squirrel and desert kit fox, all classified as fully protected by the California Department of Fish and Game, as well as other animals in the Planning Unit, the BLM has proposed establishing several natural areas in the El Paso Planning Unit, including the proposed Desert Tortoise Natural Area north of California City which will be about 30 square miles in size and will protect the habitat of the protected animals by excluding grazing, off-road vehicles and other land uses which disturb essential habitat components.

DECISIONS

82. Protect and maintain critical wildlife habitat in the planning unit, and continue to conduct surveys in most areas along eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains to identify critical habitat.

Designation and protection of critical wildlife habitat (food, water, cover) is necessary to maintain natural wildlife populations.

- ★ 83. Designate a Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area to protect outstanding and unique wildlife habitat for the desert tortoise, Mojave ground squirrel and other desert animals. The following will be accomplished.

- a. Designate as a Research Natural Area.
- b. Enhance and improve habitat for the desert tortoise and other animal species in the area, including the rare Mojave ground squirrel.
- c. Acquire private lands within the boundary of the proposed natural area.
- d. Fence the boundaries to exclude grazing and unauthorized vehicular use which are detrimental to the habitat and wildlife.

The proposed area has the highest known population densities of the desert tortoise. Densities average 200 tortoises per square mile with one locality having densities of 1000-2000

tortoises per square mile. Elsewhere in the desert, average tortoise density is 5 to 50 tortoises per square mile in areas of suitable habitat. The desert tortoise is the State Reptile, a popular animal with the public in southern California, and is fully protected. The Mojave ground squirrel is also fully protected and is listed as rare by the California Department of Fish and Game.

- ★ 84. Approximately five square miles of land between the northeast corner of the proposed Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area and Koehn Dry Lake will be considered for addition to the proposed Research Natural Area, pending acquisition of private land (three square miles). Vehicle travel in this area will be limited to public roads.

Addition of the land to the proposed tortoise natural area would protect a portion of wild-life habitat from the Rand Mountains to the southeastern edge of Koehn Dry Lake. This habitat supports fauna which is different from that of the current natural area proposal. Tortoise density in this proposed addition is moderate. The edge of Koehn Dry Lake is relatively undisturbed alkali sink habitat which should be protected for natural values. Addition of five square miles of land would also serve as a buffer zone between the proposed Mojave Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area and the heavily used Rand Open Area, an area designated for off-road vehicle use.

- ★ 85. Dove Springs, Butterbread and Water Canyon Area will be managed for preservation of natural values. This will accomplish the following:
- a. Enhance and improve habitat by: (1) livestock management, (2) designating a system of roads and trails taking into account the requirements of birds for solitude, especially in the breeding season (eagle aeries, use of springs by wildlife), (3) limiting camping and parking to designated areas only, (4) separating livestock and wildlife water into different areas, i.e., a tank for livestock separate from spring, and a fence around spring or a wildlife drinker and (5) limiting camping at water sources under California Department of Fish and Game Code.
 - b. Establish trend study plots in riparian and other habitats to measure wildlife use and habitat change.
 - c. Explore the possibility of key tract acquisition and land exchange in these three areas for more efficient land management.
 - d. Develop nature walks and interpretive displays and prepare a bird list for public use. Floral displays and rare plants will be included in the interpretive program.
 - e. Develop a Wildlife Habitat Management Plan for the areas and provide for enforcement of off-road vehicle regulations through provisions of the Sikes Act.

The Dove Springs/Butterbread area supports over 160 species of birds, many of which are on the significant species list. Some are the golden eagle, prairie falcon, great horned owl, barn owl, burrowing owl, roadrunner, lesser goldfinch, yellow warbler and western kingbird. Game birds such as the California quail and chukar are common. Management of grazing and water resources in addition to limitation of vehicle use to designated roads and trails will prevent degradation of habitat.

The Water Canyon area is unique in regard to the desert. It interfaces on the north with flora and fauna of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Kelso Valley, on the west with Central Valley communities and on the east with the Mojave Desert. It is bordered on the north by Jawbone Canyon which is a corridor to Sierran communities, and on the south by Tehachapi Pass which unites the Central Valley with the Mojave Desert. The result is a diverse flora and fauna. Small game species such as quail, chukar, mourning dove, and cottontail rabbits are common. Many migratory birds use the area and raptors nest in isolated places. Management of grazing and limitation of vehicular use to designated roads and trails will prevent degradation of habitat.



86. Designate the area adjacent to Cerro Coso College as a Research Natural Area. The district will work with Cerro Coso College to determine the feasibility of a management agreement for utilizing the area for various purposes including study and research.

A request will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.

This area surrounds the newly established Cerro Coso College and is ideal for a natural area associated with the college. The lands lying within the basin and extending south to the crest of the Rademacher Hills contain two wildlife habitat types, Creosote Bush flat to rolling hills, and Creosote Bush rocky slopes, and are capable of supporting a high density and diversity of wildlife. Reptiles and small mammals are particularly numerous and include such species as the desert tortoise, desert iguana, chuckwalla, leopard lizard, desert horned lizard, antelope ground squirrel, kangaroo rat, and many others.

College administrators and teachers want to use the lands for education and an outdoor classroom. Present course offerings regularly include herpetology, desert natural history and botany. The close proximity of this area to the college would allow outdoor laboratories and field trips during scheduled class periods. Local school children (grades 1-8) are frequently taken on field trips to the desert and the proposed natural area would provide a controlled site close to the schools. The Open Space Element of the Ridgecrest General Plan (June 1973) notes that Cerro Coso College had requested that BLM hold in "trust" five sections of land surrounding the college for a natural area or reserve. The Open Space Element supports the concept of the reserve or natural area. Use of the area by equestrians could be compatible under management.

87. No communication sites will be constructed which will negatively impact raptor aeries. On-site surveys for raptors will be made for each proposed communication site.

Raptors are fully protected by federal and state laws and they are significant desert wildlife species requiring solitude for successful nesting. Communication site construction can disrupt essential habitat conditions needed for successful reproduction.

- ★ 88. Manage the Sage Canyon and Horse Canyon areas to protect the wildlife resources and critical habitat by accomplishing the following:
- Development of a wildlife habitat management plan to protect and maintain critical habitat. This will be coupled with the grazing management plan to insure consistency.
 - Developing a Sikes Act agreement for enforcement purposes.
 - Evaluating the possibility of acquiring private lands in the canyons.
 - Researching the advantages of having private lands as access points. These private lands will be included in the grazing Allotment Management Plan and managed accordingly under an exchange of use agreement.
 - Working with an archaeological specialist if fencing is required for archaeological sites. A wildlife trend study plot might be included with archaeological sites and fenced as one unit.

Sage Canyon is part of the land withdrawn from all entry (except minerals and grazing) for the Monache-Walker Pass Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area. Both Horse and Sage Canyon have high values for several reasons. There is a permanent stream in Sage Canyon which extends for a few miles through several habitat types and includes elements of Digger Pine, Canyon Oak, Joshua Tree, and Shadscale. Riparian vegetation adjacent to the water is particularly valuable wildlife habitat.

These canyons support a high diversity of wildlife species. Many vertebrate species meet the eastern or western edge of their geographic ranges here. Several species typical of the Sierran fauna occur with their desert counterparts. For example, the yellow-eared, California, little, and long-tailed pocket mice all occur in the same habitat. This is unusual and unique for this area. The same situation is true of several related species of snakes and lizards. Golden eagles, several species of hawks and many species of birds on the Blue List (burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, mountain quail, barn owl, Bewick's wren, mountain bluebird, lesser goldfinch and many others) all occur here. There is potential for rare salamanders.

Visitors and vehicular use and camping are increasing and are unregulated, camping sites are expanding, roads are widening and new trails are being developed. The habitat (soils, vegetation and solitude) is deteriorating. Campers cut down and burn joshua trees. Many campsites are adjacent to streams and human use is destroying riparian vegetation. Livestock grazing has altered vegetative composition, reduced species diversity and percent cover. Subclimax and invader species of annual and perennial plants have increased and palatable species have decreased. Limitation of vehicular use, designation of camping sites and management of livestock grazing will allow for improvement of wildlife habitat.

89. Manage the Koehn Lake Area for its wildlife, vegetative and archaeological values.

The alkali sink plant community on the east and south shores has an unusual species composition. As an unusual plant community, it supports a unique wildlife community. The shoreline has significant archaeological values.

- ★ 90. Protect and maintain raptor aeries at Robbers Roost in solitude from human and human-related disturbances. Human activity will not be permitted within 500 yards of the raptor aeries from February 1 through July 1 of every year.

Many species of raptors, including the prairie falcon, use Robbers Roost for nesting. Once listed as "threatened" by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the status of the prairie falcon on the new federal lists is still pending. Populations in the California Desert are believed to be declining. Special protection is necessary because of habitat disturbance, destruction, indiscriminate shooting and falconers who take eggs and young from nests. Robbers Roost is an excellent raptor aerie because it provides an extensive view of the Indian Wells Valley and is a vantage point for observing prey.

The Bureau of Land Management is directed to keep all wildlife species on national resource lands from being listed on the federal Threatened and Endangered Species Lists. Protective measures are needed to minimize the possibility of the prairie falcon being placed on the Threatened Species List and to help reverse the declining trend in desert population.

91. Conduct additional wildlife studies throughout the Planning Unit to increase knowledge and evaluate conditions as time and manpower permit.

There is little knowledge about the requirements of several significant species of wildlife. Additional surveys of various habitats are needed to determine distribution, density and abundance of species including desert tortoise, slender salamander, prairie falcon, Mojave ground squirrel and various significant reptiles. Information accumulated will be incorporated into future management adjustments.



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
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RESEARCH NATURAL AREA
SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA
PRIMITIVE AREA
SCENIC CORRIDOR (62)
SCENIC OVERLOOK (54)
EQUESTRIAN TRAIL
PROPOSED WAY STATION
MAJOR UTILITY CORRIDOR
AIRPORT PROTECTION
ACQUIRE LANDS (7)
COMMUNICATION SITE (1)
RARE PLANT PROTECTION (34)
SAND & GRAVEL SITE (26)

VEHICLE ACTIVITY:


 **CLOSED TO VEHICLE USE**


 **OPEN AREA**

RESTRICTED:

 **DESIGNATED ROADS & TRAILS**

COMPETITIVE EVENTS:

 **B.L.M. SYSTEM**

 **SPONSOR OPTION**



MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN EL PASO PLANNING UNIT

★ REFERS TO NUMBERS ON FRONT PAGE MAP AND LEGEND

ADOPTION DATE: AUGUST 10, 1976

INTRODUCTION

These decisions set the policy and management direction for the national resource lands in the El Paso Planning Unit.

Some of these decisions are effective immediately and will be reflected in a variety of ways. For example, the "designation" of the various Natural Areas shown on the map has the immediate effect of specifying the type of public use, resource conditions, outdoor recreation occupancy and use, and resource development which will be authorized or permitted by the Bureau of Land Management. Bureau actions on requests for use of the land within these areas will immediately reflect the purposes and objectives of this designation as stated in the Code of Federal Regulations.

Certain other decisions will require additional study and planning. For example, the decision related to range management will require preparation of detailed Allotment Management Plans before implementation can take place.

Finally, there are decisions in this report which will require additional manpower to accomplish. For example, special investigations are needed throughout the planning unit to locate significant plant and wildlife species. Implementation of these decisions will depend upon funding provided through the budget process.

LANDS

DECISIONS

- ★ 1. Analyze candidate communication sites for suitability for this purpose.
- ★ 2. Concentrate future utilities, such as power transmission lines, pipe lines, and telephone lines within a defined corridor paralleling the east side of Highway 178 north of Searles Lake. Route the existing power line to this corridor when the present right-of-way permit expires.
- ★ 3. Utilize the two existing major north-south utility corridors (paralleling Highway 14 and 395) for future routing of interstate and inter-regional power transmission lines, pipe lines, and telephone lines.
4. Inventory existing surface waters and hot springs and note on official land records as public water resources.
5. Retain approximately 18,000 acres of national resource lands west of the city of Ridgecrest.
- ★ 6. Review the withdrawal of approximately 640 acres of military lands currently contaminated by aerial gunnery ordnance. Explore with the U.S. Navy the feasibility of decontaminating this land. Should decontamination prove successful, utilize this land for exchange purposes to block up national resource land in public use areas or critical management areas.
- ★ 7. Approximately 28,806 acres of BLM land identified for disposal through private exchange will be utilized in acquiring private lands within the Desert Tortoise Preserve, the El Paso Mountain area, Walker Pass area, Owens Peak Primitive area, Black Mountain Primitive area, Sage Canyon and Horse Canyon area as well as the Dove Springs - Butterbread Canyon and Water Canyon areas. Private lands in the Rand Oil-Road Vehicle Use area will also be acquired.
- ★ 8. Withdraw Castle Buttes for a rock collecting area. Withdraw from mineral entry and do voluntary relinquishment on existing claims. Explore the possibility of interagency cooperation (local and state) acquiring additional adjacent land for a future Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PPP) transfer to a county or state entity. Designate the area for existing roads and trails.
8. Investigate the feasibility, and initiate if appropriate, a land exchange program in the Butterbread/Jawbone Canyon area to improve the public land pattern for management and administrative effectiveness.
- ★ 10. The approach zone of the Trone and Inyokern Airports will be identified as Airport Approach Zones and administrative procedures will be established to control the height of any proposed structures. Any application for construction or concentration of public use in this area should be referred to FAA and local air authorities for review and recommendation.
11. The right-of-way application issued to Kern-Round Company will be reviewed for possible termination.
12. BLM will discuss the possibility of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company relinquishing its preference rights to public and private lands along the Southern Pacific right-of-way for nation ground purposes.
13. Occupancy trespass on public lands, especially in the El Paso Mountains, will be eliminated.
14. Isolated pockets of indiscriminate dumping will be removed from the national resource lands and the populace dissuaded from any further usage of national resource lands at convenient dump sites.
15. All lands in the planning unit will remain classified for retention unless otherwise noted.
16. National resource lands in this unit will not be used for urban expansion and development.
17. Land simultaneously classified for Point Reyes Exchange and State Indemnity selection will be reviewed.
18. 3,126 acres of land currently classified for small tracts will be reclassified for exchange purposes.
19. The Trone Railroad Company will be contacted in pursuit of relinquishment of the old Garden City Station.
20. Aerial sites will be allowed in the areas that are presently open. Water will be supplied and maintained by permittee.

GEOLOGY, ENERGY AND MINERALS

21. Encourage through cooperation with state and local governments and mining operators: (a) mitigation of pollution and other forms of environmental disturbance and (b) rehabilitation of open pits, as reasonably as possible, to their premineral state (both topographically and vegetatively).
22. Give active consideration to solar and wind energy development within this planning unit. Very cautious or any other sizable buildings proposed and planned should be built so that full use is made of the solar and wind energy potential.
23. Assess the Garlock Fault in its entirety on national resource land. Select the best example of its surface manifestation and nominate to the Register of National Landmarks.
- ★ 24. Open the Koehn Lake area to mineral leasing with consideration for existing wildlife and cultural values.
25. With the exception of the areas recommended for withdrawal from the operation of the Mining Act of 1922, i.e., Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, Black Mountain Primitive Area, Owens Peak Primitive Area, Cerro Coso Research Natural Area and Argus Mountain Primitive Area, the El Paso planning unit should remain open for mineral exploration and development.
- ★ 26. Allow use of identified sand and gravel sites as shown in the plan, until they are depleted.
27. Proceed with the processing of geothermal lease applications in the Searles Lake area.

RANGE AND VEGETATIVE PRODUCTS

28. Correlate factors of annual plant density, plant volume, soil moisture and air temperature to determine turn-out dates and numbers in issuing licenses and leases on ephemeral range areas.
29. Retain the ephemeral range classification on the area east of Highway 14, and designate the class of livestock as sheep. Keep sheep bedding and watering locations at least 1/2 mile away from main highways through management stipulations.
30. Develop an intensive livestock management plan for all range use areas west of Highway 14. Establish proper grazing system and execute exchange of use agreements for specified private lands. In the interim, custodial management should be allowed at the capacity determined by the range inventory in the Unit Resource Analysis. Annual flexibility will be determined each year.
31. Authorize grazing use of ephemeral forage between the Los Angeles Aqueduct and Highway 14 only to the extent possible without damage to perennial species. This area will ultimately be part of an Allotment Management Plan. Utilization of ephemeral forage will conform with the plan when it is developed.
32. Locate and establish exclosure study plots in representative range or habitat types throughout the planning unit with priority given the canyon areas along the west boundary of the unit. Establish vegetative studies, including photo/trend plots and exclosures in key areas giving added weight to those areas which are also important for wildlife, wildflower, archaeology and recreation.
33. Several areas within the planning unit are considered critical range and wildlife habitat. There is need for immediate attention with proper management practices and development of long-range studies. The following identifies the areas and provides guides for implementation. There are three canyons in serious and rapidly deteriorating condition: Indian Wells, Horse, and Sage Canyon; and two canyons in good condition: Short Canyon and Sand Canyon.
 - a. (1) Indian Wells Canyon

Objective: Improve productivity of the range, protect and improve key wildlife habitat, and improve scenic qualities.

Decisions: Construct exclosures and establish permanent study plots for determining the current and future production potentials. This will be correlated with Range and Vegetative Products decision 32.
 - b. (2 & 3) Horse and Sage Canyon

Objective: To help rapid deterioration of a productive range area and to improve productivity of the range; to protect and improve key wildlife habitat; and to improve scenic qualities.

Decisions:
 1. Use information gained from the exclosure and trend study plots in Indian Wells Canyon to determine production potential in Horse and Sage Canyon.
 2. Limit camping to specified areas. Post designated camping areas and designated roads. Post signs to discourage off-road vehicle use.
 - c. (4) Short Canyon

Objective: To manage Short Canyon to preserve its good range conditions.

Decision: Information will be gathered with regards to range resources for the development of an Allotment Management Plan. Future management, which may be different from the past, will be specified in the Allotment Management Plan.

d. (5) Sand Canyon

Objective: The preservation of Charlotte's Phacelia (*Phacelia nashiana*).

Decision: Develop an intensive livestock management plan. Preservation of the rare plant may be accomplished by a grazing management system and selected exclosures, or elimination of grazing.

c. Use will be made of "natural" exclosures to determine current and future potential of the range. A prime example of a "natural" exclosure is the fenced right-of-way bordering Highway 14. Permanent trend study plots will be established as soon as possible in and adjacent to representative areas in these and other "natural" exclosures.

★ 34. Protect sites in the following locations for rare plant species:

Charlotte's Phacelia (<i>Phacelia nashiana</i>)	Sand Canyon Jawbone Canyon Water Canyon Cerro Area
Kern Primrose (<i>Commisoria kernensis</i>)	Freeman Canyon El Paso Peak Dove Wall (1 1/2 miles west)
Scaly Stemmed Sand Plant (<i>Pholisma arenarium</i>)	Cerro Coso Area Tortoise Area
Hermit Cactus (<i>Sclerocactus polyacanthus</i>)	Black Mountain Iron Canyon
Fiddleneck (<i>Amarinksia venicosa</i>)	Water Canyon Dove Spring Hill (1 mile east)

35. Specific action for local burro management in Argus and Slate Ranges will be developed in coordination with the overall burro management program. In preparing these recommendations, the Unit Resource Analysis data for the Red Mountain/El Paso Planning Unit will be consulted.

SOIL AND WATERSHED

36. Protect all watershed areas, especially areas which are susceptible to severe erosion by impact, by limiting uses which will disturb vegetation and the soil surface.
37. Control surface activities which will deteriorate water supply.
38. Endorse and assist other agencies which have programs to prevent water quality deterioration.
39. Road standards will be established which would minimize erosion hazards. They will include guidelines on (a) location, and (b) design (grade, side slope drainage, etc.) for both future and existing roads.
40. Reduce damages by flood and sediments on roads and highways by improving drainage ways and limiting use in areas susceptible to severe erosion by wind and water.
41. Encourage miners, developers and other users of the desert to consider the environment in their work and recreation.

RECREATION

- ★ 42. A way (trails and mobile intermittent) field contact station will be planned and implemented in the future. The way station will be located at the junction of Highway 14 and the Randburg - Mojave Road (California City Blvd). Field contact stations will be located intermittently throughout the unit with no firm location designated at this time.
43. A general recreation / interpretive guide to the planning unit will be prepared to maximize user satisfaction and opportunities for recreation and resource understanding.
44. Rock and mineral collecting (rockhounding) areas will be protected from commercial removal of material.
45. Natural springs and waters on national resource lands in the unit will be protected and maintained to maximize hunting and bird watching opportunities and to provide livestock water. Water will be tested annually as to potability. The California Department of Fish and Game will be requested to enforce, on an occurrence basis, the camping restrictions related to wildlife watering places.
46. A selective roadside and highway signing program will be developed to identify recreation areas and significant lightseeing/interpretive features. Signs will be designed to be unobtrusive.
47. A mapping and strategic system of marking or signing desert roads and trails at major access points will be undertaken for the management of vehicle use.
48. Scenic intrusions located throughout the unit will be removed or modified through rehabilitation. These include mining scars, illegal and unnecessary signs, abandoned autos, junk piles and litter.
49. A comprehensive physical protection program for fragile and irreplaceable natural-cultural features such as petroglyphs, geological formations, historic sites, botanical areas and rare or endangered species will be developed.
50. A study of users, campers and picnickers, will be undertaken in the desert facing canyons and the El Paso Mountains to determine their needs and preferences in terms of the possible establishment of campgrounds and picnic areas.
51. Environmental Study Plot shall be established and monitored in heavy use recreation areas in order to assess environmental impact trends of recreational activities. Special attention shall be given to long range assessment of oil-road vehicle impacts and to an evaluation of the practicality of the rest-tation concept in oil-road vehicle management.
52. A brochure will be prepared with a map of hiking and equestrian trails and areas in the planning unit to identify these opportunities to the public. These brochures could be available at way stations, field contact stations, district offices and at local business establishments in the desert community.
- ★ 53. An oil-road vehicle management agreement line through Butterbread and Jawbone Canyon will be adopted. On the east side of the line a cooperative agreement with the private landowner will be implemented to assist BLM in enforcement of vehicle use limitations in this area. On the west side of the line, vehicle use will be by permit only. Management is not currently capable of implementing a formal permit system at this time. However, long-term objectives may warrant a simple permit system to regulate use. In the interim, a close working coordination with the private landowner will be maintained.

★ 54. Work will be undertaken with the State Highway Department in developing plans for scenic overlooks at the following locations:

- a. The junction of Highway 395 and the road to Randburg (north junction).
 - b. The broad pull out along Highway 395 one mile north of the junction with the Gridlock Road.
 - c. The junction of Highway 395 and the road to Ridgecrest.
 - d. Opal Mountain, approximately one mile east of the junction of Highway 14 and the Red Rock Inyokern Road.
 - a. State Pass north of Searles Lake.
55. An auto guide to the sights and features of the planning unit will be prepared and made available to motorists at district BLM offices, way stations, field contact stations, local businesses and through auto clubs. Roadside signs and exhibits will be installed at points of particular interest, such as the Garlock Fault, Los Angeles Aqueduct, Black Mountain, Last Chance Canyon, Tortoise Area, etc. Signs will be kept to a minimum due to maintenance problems, and emphasis will be placed on brochures and maps.

★ 56. The Bureau will continue to give priority to the completion of the Pacific Crest Trail as an important recreation facility in this planning unit. A detailed Recreation Activity Plan for the Pacific Crest Trail and related facilities such as water, primitive camp sites, trail heads, feeder trails, etc., will be completed. There is a need for providing feeder trail access from desert-facing canyons in this planning unit. Feeder trails which will provide access to desert communities and recreation areas west of the planning unit will be considered.

57. The Bureau will review the agreement with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power in hopes of finding some way to repair surface disturbances along the new Los Angeles Aqueduct. Rehabilitation will take place only after feasibility studies are completed and reveal significant rehabilitation is possible.

58. The Bureau will continue to eliminate graffiti on rocks throughout the planning unit.

59. Future transmission line towers and other facilities erected within the unit will be located and constructed of material or painted in such a way as to mitigate their adverse impacts upon the visual scene.

★ 60. Establish an Owens Peak Primitive Area to preserve the primitive values of the area as well as significant natural and cultural values.

- a. A request will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.
- b. Vehicle use will be eliminated.
- c. Private land will be acquired within the area.
- d. Man made intrusions will be removed.
- e. Man made landscape scars will be rehabilitated where practicable.
- f. A grazing system will be developed to minimize and mitigate grazing impacts.
- g. The possibility of extending the primitive area northward to Nine Mile Canyon will be considered in the Oquirrh Management Framework Plan.

61. Vehicles used on the designated road and trail system will be equipped with mufflers as required by the California Highway Patrol and the California Vehicle Code. Vehicles used in fire hazard areas will also be equipped with spark arrestors approved by the U.S. Forest Service.

★ 62. Establish Scenic Corridors as shown on map, and a Scenic Corridor feasibility study will be implemented along the Garlock Road from Highway 14 to Randburg and to Highway 395. Land uses along the corridor will be consistent with visual amenities. Discussions with the State and County will be undertaken regarding scenic easements and/or necessary zoning to implement the corridor on private land. This scenic corridor will not be withdrawn and does not exclude off-road vehicle activity and recreational camping.

★ 63. Establish the Argus Mountain Primitive area to preserve the natural, primitive and unique diversity of plant and animal life in the area.

- a. Man made intrusions will be removed.
- b. Man made landscape scars will be rehabilitated where practicable.
- c. Vehicle use will be designated closed.
- d. Private land will be acquired within the area.

a. A request will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.

★ 64. Designate a portion of the Great Salt Basin area as a Research Natural Area. Recreation, wildlife activity, and an archaeological protection plan will be developed.

65. Old pipe and junk will be removed from the canyon and abandoned homesites in the Argus Range, especially from below the fault and along the trail to Great Salt Basin. Graffiti on the rock at the fault site will be obliterated. Care will be exercised to avoid elimination of articles of historic significance. Regular patrol will be established to pick up litter and protect the resources in this very unique area.

66. Off-road vehicle use will be managed in accordance with the off-road vehicle designations and definitions shown on the Management Framework Plan map.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

67. Organize an orderly program for inventory, evaluation, recording, protection, salvage and mitigation on archaeological resources. The following specific needs have been identified:

- a. Specific attention should be given to cultural resources in lands reports, technical reports and land use permit processing.
- b. A complete filing system.
- c. A systematic inventory and evaluation program, including field test sampling.
- d. A relative archaeological rating system.
- e. A program for nomination of suitable sites to the National Register of Historic Places.
- f. A comprehensive protection and monitoring system.
- g. A salvage and/or mitigation program.
68. Support and assist a local and Bureau wide public education program regarding cultural resources.
69. Initiate an oral history program. "Old Timers" should be interviewed by Bureau personnel and their recollections of the past recorded on tape.
70. Encourage and support intensive and systematic archaeological research, including survey, excavation and analysis by reputable institutions making use of Antiquities Act permits as a management tool. Excavation will be done only when the need is clearly stated and in compliance with federal procedures.

★ 71. Manage the El Paso Mountain area to protect the scenic, natural, cultural and recreational values.

- a. Limit vehicular use within the El Paso Mountain area to a designated system of roads carefully selected to provide reasonable user access, protect fragile resources, maintain some feeling of seclusion and solitude, and limit parking and camping to designated areas only.
- b. Remove unnecessary intrusions and rehabilitate landscape scars where practicable.
- c. Post and prohibit camping within 200 yards of water sources and guzzlers under California Department of Fish and Game Title 14, Section 308.5 and 739.
- d. Provide trained field personnel (e.g., desert rangers), especially during high use periods, to conduct patrols and to supervise visitor use. Resident personnel and/or 24 hour visitor use supervision may be necessary.
- e. Develop an interpretive program for the cultural and natural resource consistent with the recreation area's management needs.

★ 72. Designate the Black Mountain/Black Hills area as a Primitive Area. Prepare and submit a request to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.

- a. Update and revise the present Last Chance Canyon Archaeological District, a property on the National Register of Historic Places, to more accurately conform to the cultural resource and to develop a specific management plan for the property.
- f. Investigate the historic uses and features within the boundaries of Last Chance Canyon Archaeological District for inclusion with the present National Register listing or for nomination as separate sites or districts.
- g. Evaluate Schmidt's Tunnel for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

73. Nominate the Koehn Dunes Archaeological District to the National Register of Historic Places.

74. Protect the Willow Spring Archaeological Site by the following action:

- a. Nominate the Willow Spring Archaeological Site to the National Register of Historic Places.
- b. Barricade vehicular access to petroglyphs at Willow Spring.

75. Protect the Boulder Canyon Archaeological District by the following actions:

- a. Nominate the Boulder Canyon Archaeological District to the National Register of Historic Places.
- b. Conduct systematic test sampling at Ker-226 (Boulder Canyon Village Site).
- c. Develop a plan with the private landowner to barricade the dirt road into the Boulder Canyon Village Site and/or fence (barbed wire or drift) the immediate site area.
- d. Develop an interpretive program for the Boulder Canyon Village Site.
- e. Develop a cooperative management agreement with the private landowner.

76. Encourage investigation of the historic site of Randburg, and/or select buildings and features on national resource land within the immediate vicinity of the Randburg townsite, for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and recording on the Historical American Buildings Survey, and cooperate in preservation and management.

77. Investigate Freeman's Junction, historically known as Coyote Hole Station as a possible historic site nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

78. Evaluate the Cow Heaven Archaeological Site for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

79. Contact the National Park Service to officially define the boundaries of Walker Pass National Historic Landmark, and assist National Park Service by identifying manageable boundaries and by submitting proposed boundaries to the California State Historic Preservation Officer for review and comment.

80. Evaluate the Dove Springs and Cross Mountain Archaeological Areas for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

★ 81. Coordinate nomination of the Twenty Mule Team Box Road to the National Register of Historic Places with other appropriate governmental offices and agencies including the National Park Service (Death Valley National Monument) and the California State Department of Parks and Recreation.



WILDLIFE

82. Protect and maintain critical wildlife habitat in the planning unit, and continue to conduct surveys in most areas along eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains to identify critical habitat.

★ 83. Designate a Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area to protect outstanding and unique wildlife habitat for the desert tortoise, Mojave ground squirrel and other desert animals. The following will be accomplished:

- a. Designate as a Research Natural Area.
- b. Enhance and improve habitat for the desert tortoise and other animal species in the area, including the rare Mojave ground squirrel.
- c. Acquire private lands within the boundary of the proposed natural area.
- d. Fence the boundaries to exclude grazing and unauthorized vehicular use which are detrimental to the habitat and wildlife.

★ 84. Approximately five square miles of land between the northeast corner of the proposed Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area and Koehn Dry Lake will be considered for addition to the proposed Research Natural Area, pending acquisition of private land (three square miles). Vehicle travel in this area will be limited to public roads.

★ 85. Dove Springs, Butterbread and Water Canyon Area will be managed for preservation of natural values. This will accomplish the following:

- a. Enhance and improve habitat by: (1) livestock management, (2) designating a system of roads and trails taking into account the requirements of birds for wildlife, especially in the breeding season (single series, use of springs by wildlife), (3) limiting camping and parking to designated areas only, (4) separating livestock and wildlife water into different areas, i.e., a tank for livestock separate from spring, and a fence around spring or a wildlife drinker and (5) limiting camping at water sources under California Department of Fish and Game Code.
- b. Establish trend study plots in riparian and other habitats to measure wildlife use and habitat change.
- c. Explore the possibility of key tract acquisition and land exchange in these three areas for more efficient land management.
- d. Develop nature walk and interpretive display, and prepare a bird list for public use. Floral display and rare plants will be included in the interpretive program.
- e. Develop a Wildlife Habitat Management Plan for the area and provide for enforcement of off-road vehicle regulations through provisions of the Sikes Act.

★ 86. Designate the area adjacent to Cerro Coso College as a Research Natural Area. The district will work with Cerro Coso College to determine the feasibility of a management agreement for utilizing the area for various purposes including study and research.

A request will be prepared and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for withdrawal from mining and other forms of entry to protect and preserve natural values and public land status. Prepare a minerals report using unit resource analysis data to include with the request to the Secretary, with the recommendation that after acceptance, further investigation of mineral potential be conducted prior to final action on the withdrawal. This will provide for immediate protection on the known surface resources and primitive values but will withhold final judgment on permanent withdrawal until the "not fully known" mineral potential is further studied. In the interim, existing valid mineral rights are not affected.

87. No communication sites will be constructed which will negatively impact radio or series. On-site surveys for receptors will be made for each proposed communication site.

★ 88. Manage the Sage Canyon and Horse Canyon areas to protect the wildlife resources and critical habitat by accomplishing the following:

- a. Development of a wildlife habitat management plan to protect and maintain critical habitat. This will be coupled with the grazing management plan to insure consistency.
 - b. Developing a Sikes Act agreement for enforcement purposes.
 - c. Evaluating the possibility of acquiring private lands in the canyons.
 - d. Researching the advantages of having private lands as access points. These private lands will be included in the grazing Allotment Management Plan and managed accordingly under an exchange of use agreement.
 - e. Working with an archaeological specialist if fencing is required for archaeological sites. A wildlife trend study plot might be included with archaeological sites and treated as one unit.
89. Manage the Koehn Lake Area for its wildlife, vegetative and archaeological values.

★ 90. Protect and maintain radio or series at Robbery Roost in solitude from human and human-related disturbances. Human activity will not be permitted within 500 yards of the radio series from February 1 through July 1 of every year.

91. Conduct additional wildlife studies throughout the planning unit to increase knowledge and evaluate conditions as time and manpower permit.



THOSE INTERESTED IN RATIONALE FOR THE ABOVE ACTIONS, MAY SUBMIT A REQUEST IN WRITING FOR A COPY OF THE "EL PASO MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN" REPORT
AUGUST 10, 1976
MAIL TO: BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
800 TRUXTON AVENUE, ROOM 311
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93301



United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

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